

**Remarks by Ambassador Harry K. Thomas
USAID-Rotary San Fernando City Sewerage and
Septage Management Project
As prepared for delivery**

- Honorable Mayor Pablo Ortega,
- Frederick So, President of the Rotary Club of San Fernando,
- The staff of the San Fernando City Government,
- Rotarians,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

Na-imbag nga bigat! (Good morning!)

Thank you for welcoming me to San Fernando. I am honored to experience the warmth of the people of San Fernando City, a warmth that was certainly felt and enjoyed by many other Americans over a hundred years ago when you opened your doors to the former Wallace Airbase in Poro Point. We are very grateful for your hospitality. *Agya-manak u-nay* (Thank you very much).

I am very pleased to join you in this important occasion. Today's event is an affirmation of our shared commitment to help improve the welfare of the people of San Fernando City.

Lack of access to clean water in the Philippines results in millions of cases of waterborne diseases each year, causing high health and economic costs. When people are sick, they don't go to school; they don't go to work; and over a lifetime, their full potential cannot be realized. Children often bear the brunt of these negative consequences. An investment in clean water and proper sanitation is an investment in both people and the economy.

I congratulate Mayor Pablo Ortega, former Mayor Mary Jane Ortega, and the Rotary Club of San Fernando for their tireless efforts to work together to make the City of San Fernando

a clean and healthy city. The United States is proud to be a partner in this important work in protecting both the health of the citizens of San Fernando and the environment.

Let us remember that although today's ground breaking event is a very important milestone, the work does not end here. On the contrary, now the real work begins. I look forward to the great partnership that we have affirmed today and its lasting impact on the generations to come.

On behalf of the American people, I wish you success in this important endeavor.